

What does being chief mean?

By Chief Master Sgt. Jim LeVack
15th Airlift Wing command chief

What does being a Chief in today's Air Force mean? First and foremost, Chiefs are senior enlisted leaders. Chiefs have specific and unique technical knowledge and experience.

All that sounds pretty impressive.

But I will tell you there are a lot of practical pieces that go into this pretty broad concept.

Chiefs are about our troops. We need to listen to our people. We need to know their concerns and the things they are excited about and provide practical guidance based on the benefits of our experience. Be passionate for their success.

Chiefs are about patriotism. Love of country and the freedoms we enjoy motivates us to serve. I knew from a young age I wanted to be in the Air Force and more importantly that life was more than a pay check. The opportunity to serve in our



Chief LeVack

our commanders as we represent their vision and policies to our force. Service to all Airmen as we prepare them to take on additional responsibilities and the challenges the future of our Air Force has for them. The more rank we achieve, the more responsibilities we are entrusted with... the greater the magnitude of our service is required.

Chiefs are about insurance. Ensuring all Airmen are ready to deploy at a moments notice for whatever tasking that comes down. We make sure they have the right skill sets. Nothing is more important

than making sure our troops are the best at what they do. Next we make sure our troops have well honed war skills. These skills will ensure their survival in any situation we send our troops into. Finally we make sure they have the right tools and equipment. Based on the things we have learned we can make sure our troops don't experience the same the set backs we did.

Chiefs are about loving and caring for our families. I for one will tell you I've had great opportunities because I've had the support and encouragement of my family. From deployments to a remote they have stood with me. It is this bedrock of support from which I gain strength.

It is an awesome opportunity to serve as a Chief Master Sergeant in the United States Air Force. To be entrusted with the tremendous responsibilities our jobs present. The most rewarding piece is the honor of serving along side other patriots...other Airmen dedicated to protecting our Nation. Being a part of the most feared and respected Air Force on the planet.

Service – America at its best

By Col. Michael Boera
374 Air Expeditionary Wing vice commander

UTAPAO, Thailand – At various times throughout my 23 years in the U.S. Air Force, I have taken the opportunity to write articles for my hometown newspaper in Vermont for my family and friends to read and for home base newspapers where I've been assigned.

My editorials included my personal thanks for the support I received during Desert Storm, my perspective of combat air operations over Northern Iraq during Operation Provide Comfort, and my heart-felt thoughts after the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attack.

Today, I write you from Royal Thai Naval Air Station Utapao here where I am deployed in support of Operation Unified Assistance, the humanitarian relief mission in support of the tsunami victims in Thailand, Indonesia and Sri Lanka.

I have made a livelihood of flying F-16 Fighting Falcon combat aircraft and am currently assigned as the 35th Operations Group commander at Misawa Air Base, Japan. A couple of weeks ago, I was preparing to fly a local combat training mission when I received a call from my boss. I was basically told to get some shots and pack my bags because I was being sent to Thailand to help stand up the 374 Air Expeditionary Wing. About 24 hours later, I was landing at Utapao airfield.

The mission of the wing is to provide support to the intra-theater airlift units, mostly flying C-130 Hercules and C-17 Globemaster

III aircraft and HH-60 Pave Hawk helicopters, sprinkled around workable airfields in the affected countries. We are the Air Force piece of Combined Support Force 536, commanded by a U.S. Marine lieutenant general. I have never been involved in a humanitarian relief effort and now I am involved in one rivaling that of any relief effort – ever.

It has been my honor to serve in such an operation. As much as I miss being away from my family and flying the F-16, it gives me great satisfaction to be involved in a relief and recovery operation versus the typical combat operation I am so familiar with, and which usually involves some sort of destruction. This is America at its best. It is also the America that doesn't make the headlines very often, or the lead story on our top TV news stations' telecasts. In fact, this relief operation is probably not the lead story in the United States any longer.

Obviously, I am involved with the U.S. military aspect of the mission. We are but one piece of the puzzle to bring much-needed disaster relief to the victims, but a significant piece at this stage of the effort. Gradually, we will let civilian governmental and non-governmental organizations take over the bulk of the effort and most of us will return to our home stations. When I do, I hope to pick up where I left off; say "hello" to the family and get back in the cockpit of an F-16 to once again train for combat operations.

Until then, I am proud to be a part of this relief mission. It is America at its best.

Action Line



Col. Ray Torres
15th Airlift Wing commander

The purpose of the Action Line is in its name it's your direct link to me so we can work as a team to make Hickam a better community. It also allows you to recognize individuals who go "above and beyond" in their duties – and we all know there are plenty of those folks here. All members of Team Hickam are welcome to use the Action Line, however, I urge you to give the normal chain of command the first chance at resolving problems or issues. It's only fair to give our commanders and managers the first opportunity to work issues under their responsibility. If you have done this and are still not satis-

fied, give my commander's Action Line a call. If you want me to get back to you, leave your name and number, state your issue, tell me who you have talked to and why you were not satisfied with their response. I'll work your issue and respond verbally or in writing. The Action Line number is 449-2996. Messages may also be sent by e-mail to 15aw.pal@hickam.af.mil.

Parking problems

Comment: Parking in the lot on the D Street (A & C Wings) entrance of 1102 continues to be a problem. Vehicles continue to park in this lot in areas clearly marked as no parking. To further create safety problems people also park against the flow of traffic within a parking spot. While reading 15AW Instruction 31-204, dated March 8, 2002, chapter 5, I can say I have seen vehicles in violations of the majority of the parking laws listed. The violations do not stop in this lot but continue on to Hanger Ave. in front of the security forces building, across the street all around the Wood Hobby shop where vehicles can be found parking next to and in the access road between the buildings. People that do find legal parking across from the headquarters building now face a safety problem of speeders as well as those that ignore the cross walks on Vickers Avenue. One way to eliminate much of these problems would be to make

additional parking in the now grass area at the end of this parking lot (between the lot and C Street). This would allow folks to legally and safely park. Additionally speed enforcement on Vickers Avenue could be stepped up.

Response: As you know, parking can sometimes be difficult to find here on Hickam. Security forces patrols write parking tickets throughout the week. Additionally, each major facility on Hickam has a traffic warden who is authorized to write parking tickets. If you have a parking complaint, go through your parking warden and if they are not available, call security forces control center at 449-6373. Concerning speeders on Vickers Avenue, we have stepped up our speed enforcement. If you have any questions, call Master Sgt. Paul Riffle, Security Forces Operations, at 449-2200. Regarding your concerns on additional parking, Force protection requirements have dictated where we can and cannot park. Although it may be inconvenient for some personnel, there is parking available in surrounding parking lots, including the lot next to the Woodring Law Center. At this time there are no plans to construct a parking lot in the grassy area between the lot and C Street. If you have additional concerns regarding parking, call Dennis Yee, base traffic engineer, at 448-4440. Thank you for your recommendations.

Hickam Voices

What does the rank of chief master sergeant mean to you?



"It means respect, integrity, service and excellence. They earn the rank because they have the right attitude."

Airman Basic Isac Martinez-Garcia
Pacific Air Forces Regional Supply Squadron



"Chiefs are role models in all aspects of their life because every lower ranking person looks to them for guidance."

Airman 1st Class Raidee Hernandez
15th Mission Support Squadron



"A chief is the ultimate role model to me, they are an invaluable resource with experience and input on everything because they walked in my boots."

Tech. Sgt. Moreen Ishikawa
U.S. Pacific Command



"Chief master sergeants firmly believe the saying 'mission first, people always' ... simply stated they take care of their people so people take care of the mission."

Chief Master Sgt. Thomas Childress
15th Medical Group



"Chief master sergeant signifies the epitome of the enlisted corps – a senior NCO that stands as an example for all Airmen to emulate."

Col. Scott Chesnut
15th Airlift Wing vice commander

Next week's question:

What's your most unique visitor's story?

Feb. 4

Who do you think will win the Super Bowl and why?

To respond to this question, send an email to hickam.kukini@hickam.af.mil with a response and phone number to contact you.

Give us your feedback

Team Hickam members can submit letters to the editor to

hickam.kukini@hickam.af.mil.
Tell us what you think or would like to see in Kukini

Crisis Response lines

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449-0300
Life Skills Support Center
449-0175
Law Enforcement Desk
449-6373
Base Chaplain
449-1754
Military Family Abuse Shelter
533-7125

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